

Message Text

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PAGE 01 VIENTI 05600 120708Z

17

ACTION EA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE VIENTIANE 5600

USIAC

USIA FOR IEA/KLECKA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:

SUBJ: THAT LUANG FAIR

REF: USIA 22178

1. EMBASSY SENT NOTE TO MOFA SEPT 11 CONFIRMING PARTICIPATION THAT LUANG FAIR, BASED ON COUNTRY TEAM DECISION TO PARTICIPATE, LAO GOVERNMENT DEADLINE FOR ANSWERING INVITATION, AND USIA 19960 INDICATING PARTICIPATION ALREADY FORESEEN. NON-PARTICIPATION WOULD PROBABLY BE INTERPRETED AS POLITICAL GESTURE, RATHER THAN A TECHNICAL DECISION. WE WOULD HAVE TO KNOW IMMEDIATELY AND IN DETAIL WHAT FACTORS USIA AND STATE MIGHT NOW HAVE IN MIND THAT WOULD PROMPT RECONSIDERATION OF ORIGINAL AGENCY INCLINATION AND FIRM COUNTRY TEAM DECISION TO PARTICIPATE.

2. SINCE FAIR OPENS NOVEMBER 4, IN SEVEN WEEKS, DECISIONS ON EXHIBITS MUST BE MADE QUICKLY. AMERICAN HANDICRAFTS SHOW ATTRACTIVE IDEA, BUT WONDER IF OBJECTS FOR DISPLAY WOULD ARRIVE IN TIME FOR INSTALLATION.

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PAGE 02 VIENTI 05600 120708Z

MUCH OF OUTER SPACE, BICENTENNIAL SHOW, AS INDICATED

REFTEL, AVAILABLE HERE AND IN BANGKOK. POST HAS NO MATERIALS AT ALL ON AMERICAN HANDICRAFTS.

3. IN ANY CASE, COUNTRY TEAM BELIEVES SOME SORT OF SPACE EXHIBIT ADVISABLE CONSIDERING SOVIET-PATHET LAO PROPAGANDA ABOUT SOVIET TRIUMPHS IN COSMOS. FOR EXAMPLE, SEMINAR LEADERS REGULARLY QUESTION WHETHER U.S. REALLY GOT MAN ON MOON, AND CLAIM SOVIET ACHIEVEMENT OF GETTING A CAGNON THE MOON WAS MUCH MORE DIFFICULT THAN SENDING A MAN. IN ADDITION, THE SOVIET-AMERICAN COOPERATION DEMONSTRATED IN THE APOLLO-SOYUZ PROJECT WOULD, IN THE LOCAL POLICAL CONTEXT, INTRIGUE THE LAO.

4. COUNTRY TEAM ALSO BELIEVES A BICENTENNIAL THEME WOULD BE APPROPRIATE TO STRESS AMERICAN DEMOCRATIC ASPIRATIONS.

5. EXHIBIT AS OUTLINED VIENTIANE 5340 AND 5575 MUCH MORE MODEST THAN PREVIOUS YEARS, DEPENDING HEAVILY ON PAPER SHOWS WITH NO MECHANICAL MARVELS OR THREE-DIMENSIONAL MODELS. BELIEVE CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED LOCALLY WITH REDUCED STAFF, BANGKOK ASSISTANCE. ONLY MECHANICAL ASPECTS ARE REAR-VIEW PROJECTORS AND MOVING ARM ON CUT-OUT SPACEMAN.

6. IN CONVERSATION MORNING SEPTEMBER 12, DIRECTOR OF COMMERCE IN CHARGE OF FAIR INDICATED CONSTRUCTION OF PAVILIONS COULD BEGIN OCTOBER 13, DAY AFTER HUGE INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATIONS PLANNED FOR THAT LUANG FAIRGROUNDS. HE SAID HE HAD RECEIVED FIRM COMMITMENTS FROM CHINA, USSR, BRITAIN, AUSTRALIA, AND JAPAN, BUT ADDED HE IS NOT UP-TO-DATE BECAUSE NOTES ARE FUNNELED THROUGH MOFA. IN CONVERSATION SEPTEMBER 9 (VIENTIANE 5549), OFFICIAL OF MOFA PROTOCOL OFFICE INDICATED FRANCE AND NORTH VIET-NAM PLANNING PARTICIPATION AS WELL.

7. IN ORDER TO MAKE DECISIONS REGARDING RE-ORDERING PAVILION FOOTINGS, CONTRACT WITH LOCAL CONSTRUCTION FIRM, AND LOGISTICS OF EXHIBITS, POST WOULD APPRECIATE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 VIENTI 05600 120708Z

KNOWING AGENCY ATTITUDE ASAP.
CONVERSE

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